of their peaceful and legitimate errands on the high seas."

President Wilson's announcements were warmly approved by public opinion in the United States. But they were not followed by any preparation for action. The President excused his inaction by a statement that he would give Germany no provocation which would deter her from reconsidering her threat*

A graphic description of the state of things in America at this time was given in the following letter from our Ambassador in the States, Sir Cecil Spring-Rice :—

" 23rd February, 1917.

The situation is much that of a soda-water bottle with the wires cut but the cork unexploded. The President appears to be watching.

Letter from Spring-Rice

There are two currents of opinion.

One is, has the President lost ground by delay ? The other is, has he gained it ? His policy has always been to wait for an uncontrollable outburst of public opinion. The question naturally is, has public opinion grown stronger or weaker in consequence of the action of Germany and the inaction of the United States ? Germany has declared that she will destroy United States ships if found in the War zone. The United States has declared that Germany will do so at her

peril. But so far no United States ship has been destroyed. Is this because no United States ship has been sent into the War zone or because no United States ship has been found there ? American ships have certainly passed these waters. Others are on their way. But the great majority have